

Message Text

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73

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-12 RSR-01 /111 W

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R 141655 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8239

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE FREETOWN 0790

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PINT, SL

SUBJECT: ELECTION RESULTS

REF FREETOWN 0732

1. APC CANDIDATES WON 3 OF THE 4 CONTESTS ON MAY 11 AND BOOSTED THE PARTY' S MP. TOTAL TO 83. MINEXTAFF PRATT BETA HIS OPPONENT BY A 3 TO 1 MARGIN AND THE TWO APC CANDIDATES IN BO WON EASILY. (THE SLPP LEADER M. S. MUSTAPHA LOST HIS BO NORTHEAST SEAT BY OVER 6400 VOTES).

2. THE ONE ELECTION DAY SURPRISE WAS THE SIZE OF INDEPENDENT DESMOND LUKE' S VICTORY OVER THE APC CANDIDATE IN FREETOWN WEST III. LUKE, WHO OUTPOLLED HIS OPPONENT 3 TO 1, REPORTEDLY HAD THE BACKING OF THE PRESIDENT AND WILL BE OFFERED A MINISTERIAL PORTFOLIO IN RETURN FOR HIS REJOINING THE APC. SEVERAL OF IPQ INFORMED SOURCES HAVE MENTIONED LUKE AS A LIKELY CANDIDATE FOR ATTORNEY GENERAL OR MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS IN THE NEW CABINET.

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3. ONLY ONE SEAT REMAINS TO BE CONTESTED AND THAT IS FREETOWN CENTRAL I, WHERE THE POLLING WILL TAKE PLACE TOMORROW. NANCY STEELE IS HEAVILY FAVORED TO WIN THIS RACE AGAINST N. A. P. BUCK DESPITE PERSISTENT RUMORS THAT S. I. KOROMA WILL DEPLOY APC THUGS IN AN EFFORT TO BLOCK HER ELECTION.

4. PUBLIC ATTENTION AND SPECULATION NOW IS FOCUSED ON WHAT WILL BE THE COMPOSITION AND SIZE OF THE NEW CABINET. IN THE PAST FEW DAYS THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL EDITORIALS IN THE GOVERNMENT- CONTROLLED PRESS URGING A SMALLER CABINET AND NEW FACES AND NOT JUST A RESHUFFLE OF THE OLD CROWD. THE EMBASSY SUSPECTS THESE EDITORIALS WERE INSPIRED BY PRESIDENT STEVENS, WHO HAS SAID NOTHING PUBLICLY ON THE SUBJECT OTHER THAN A REMARK TO A GROUP OF NEWLY- ELECTED MP' S THAT ALL OF THEM CANNOT BE MEMBERS OF THE CABINET AND THAT THE PORTFOLIOS WILL HAVE TO BE EVENLY DISTRIBUTED TO ALL SECTORS OF THE COUNTRY.

5. COMMENT: THE LION' S SHARE OF PORTFOLIOS IN THE LAST CABINET BELONGED TO MP' S FROM THE NORTHERN PROVINCE AND FREETOWN. IT SEEMS LIKELY THE PRESIDENT WILL REALLOCATE A NUMBER OF THESE PORTFOLIOS TO SOUTHERNERS IN AN EFFORT TO GIVE THE MENDE SOUTH OF THE COUNTRY SOME SENSE OF PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION IN THE GOVERNMENT.

OLSON

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